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Mamprusi language

Mamprusi (autonym ***Mampruli***, also *Mampelle*, *Ɔmampulli)* is a Gur language spoken in northern Ghana by the Mamprusi people. It is partially mutually intelligible with Dagbani. The Mamprusi language is spoken in a broad belt across the northern parts of the Northern Region of Ghana, stretching west to east from Yizeesi to Nakpanduri and centred on the towns of Gambaga/Nalerigu and Walewale. In Mamprusi, one speaker is a *Ɔmampuriga*, many (plural) are *Ɔmampurisi* and the land of the Mamprusi is *Ɔmampurigu*.

The language belongs to the Gur family which is part of the Niger–Congo language family, which covers most of Sub-Saharan Africa (Bendor-Samuel 1989). Within Gur it belongs to the Western Oti–Volta subgroup, and particularly its southeastern cluster of six to eight languages (Naden 1988, 1989). Closely related and very similar languages spoken nearby are Dagbani, Nanun, Kamara and Hanga in the Northern Region, and Kusaal, Nabit and Talni in the Upper East Region. Not quite so closely related are Farefare, Waali, Dagaari, Birifor and Safalaba in the Upper East and Upper West Regions and southwest of the Northern Region.

Comparatively little linguistic material on the language has been published; there is a brief sketch as an illustration of this subgroup of languages in Naden 1988.[3][4] A collection of Mampruli proverbs has been published by R.P. Xavier Plissart,[5] and a translation of the New Testament is in print,[6] a sample of which can be read and heard online.[7] There are also beginning Mampruli lessons in which the spoken language can be heard.[8]

Mampruli	
Mamprusi, *Mamprugu*	
Native to	Ghana
Ethnicity	Mamprusi people
Native speakers	230,000 (2004)[1]
Language family	Niger–Congo ▪ Atlantic–Congo ▪ Gur ▪ Northern ▪ Oti–Volta ▪ Western-Oti/Volta ▪ Southeastern ▪ **Mampruli**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`maw`
Glottolog	`mamp1244 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mamp1244)`[2]

People	Mamprusi
Language	Mampruli (Ɔmampulli?)
Country	Mamprugu

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Dialects

There is comparatively little dialect variation. The western (Walewale to the White Volta) and Far Western (west of the White Volta, area known by those to the east as "Overseas") have some variant pronunciation standards. The far Eastern dialect known as Durili is most notable for pronouncing *[r]* and *[l]* where the rest of Mampruli pronounces *[l]* and *[r]* respectively, and for some characteristic intonation patterns.

Phonology

Vowels

Mampruli has ten phonemic vowels: five short and five long vowels:

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
Low		a	

	Front	Central	Back
High	iː		uː
Mid	eː		oː
Low		aː	

Consonants

		Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar
Stop	Voiceless	p		t		k	k͡p
	Voiced	b		d		g	g͡b
Nasal		m		n	ɲ	ŋ	ŋ͡m
Fricative	Voiceless		f	s			
	Voiced		v	z			
Lateral				l			
Approximant			ʋ	r	j		

Writing system

Mampruli is written in a Latin alphabet, but the literacy rate is fairly low. The orthography currently used represents a number of allophonic distinctions. There is a description of the process of formulating the orthography.[9][10]

Alphabet

a	aa	b	d	e	ɛ	ee	f	g	'	gb	gy	h	i	k	kp	ky	l	m	n	ny	ŋ	ŋm	o	ɔ	oo	p	r	s	t	u	uu	w	y	z	'

Grammar

Mampruli has a fairly conservative Oti-Volta grammatical system. The constituent order in Mampruli sentences is usually agent–verb–object. There is a simple, non-technical grammatical study [11]<<to be expanded>>

Lexicon

The rather unusual trilingual (Mampruli-Spanish-English) dictionary[12] was superseded by the more-reliable simple glossary:[13] a full-featured Mampruli dictionary is in course of preparation.[14] A hundred-word sample can be seen on the Kamusi project site[15]

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